

To: TennCare Providers  
From: Victor Wu, Chief Medical Officer  
Mary Shelton, Director, Behavioral Health Operations  
Date: March 25, 2020  
Re: **Behavioral Health Group Therapy Telehealth Services for TennCare Enrollees - Novel COVID-19**

Dear TennCare Behavioral Health Providers,

**This is an update to the March 18, 2020 Behavioral Health Telehealth Service Memo to offer guidance on Group Therapy services.**

Providers and members are encouraged to use video-enabled virtual visits or telephonic care when appropriate to maintain behavioral health treatment during the COVID outbreak. For members or providers who do not have access to the technology required to conduct a video-enabled virtual session, we will now accept telephonic sessions in a member's home when that member has concerns about COVID-19. Please use standard CPT/HCPCS and a Place of Service of 02 for both virtual visits and telephonic sessions to indicate the visit was conducted remotely. Documentation should identify the use of telehealth or telephonic sessions and the treatment format and include supporting documentation to reflect active treatment. Per standard practice, documentation is subject to review for medical necessity and appropriateness of care.

Group Therapy includes sessions delivered during Intensive Outpatient Programs (IOP) and Partial Hospital Program (PHP).

Preferences for conducting Group Therapy via telehealth and/or telephonic sessions:

- Telehealth options that would permit actual visual connection with the member is preferred
- Encourage participants to locate themselves in a private room in their home or dwelling
- Ensure the participants understand that their privacy cannot be guaranteed as the leader cannot control who else in the home or dwelling may overhear the discussions
- Consider developing a confidentiality policy for telehealth groups which may include guidance such as using ear buds or headphones and prohibiting any recording of the session
- If the session is 100% telephonic, consider smaller number of participants given limited ability to pick up on visual indicators of distress

For resources on telepsychiatry, please visit: <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/telepsychiatry>

For additional public health and provider guidance from the TN Department of Health, please visit: <https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html>

For additional TennCare notices or future guidance from TennCare, please visit: <https://www.tn.gov/tenncare/information-statistics/tenncare-information-about-coronavirus.html>

For additional public health and provider guidance from the TN Department of Health, please visit: <https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html>

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